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property of such corporation, tangible and intangible, in this state, and shall then assess the tangible property and deduct the amount of such assessment from the total valuation and enter the remainder upon the assessment list or in the assessor's books, under the head of 'all other property.' "

The letter of the promise has thus been fulfilled, but it remains to be seen whether, in their interpretation of the law, the board of equalization will carry out the spirit of the campaign pledge. Their instruction is extremely indefinite, and, with no prescribed method of determining the real value of the franchise, it is only too probable that the board may almost ignore the law. The discretionary powers are so great as to destroy the compulsory character of the statute.

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RELATION OF THE STATE TO MUNICIPALITIES IN RHODE ISLAND.

Rhode Island was founded upon the principle of individualism, and for this principle it has stood throughout the greater part of its history, colonial and national. Naturally the spirit of local independence has always been strong—so strong that it is even contended by many that the relation of the towns to the state is the same as the relation of the states to the nation. The theory of inherent powers residing in the towns, independent of any incorporation by the state, is maintained with considerable plausibility on the basis of actual historical conditions.

All the more striking, then, is the fact that the Rhode Island legislature is no whit behind the legislatures of other states in the extent to which it arbitrarily interferes in the affairs of the cities. The situation is aggravated by the fact that a strong minority of the house and a strong majority of the senate consist of members from what may properly be called rotten boroughs. According to the constitution of 1842, not since changed in this respect, the senate consists of one senator from each town and city (without any regard to population), and in the house, which is limited to seventy-two members, each town has at least one representative, and no town or city more than one-sixth of the whole number. Providence, with two-fifths of the state's population, has one out of thirty-seven senators, and twelve out of seventy-two representatives. With a large number of back towns having populations of 600 to 3,000, decreasing in many instances, the resulting corruption in politics is easily understood.

The boss in the dominant party has for years been building up political control of these rotten boroughs, until to-day he is master of the legislature. "What he says goes." He acts, not to further

his own political fortunes, but as the agent of a small group of men, who, besides completely controlling the state politically, have during the last ten years obtained by his assistance a practical monopoly of electric traction lines, electric lighting, and bay and harbor transportation in the state.

This control of our legislature is solidly buttressed by the provision of the constitution, which requires a two-thirds vote of each house in two successive legislatures in order to propose an amendment to the constitution. No new and equitable apportionment can be arrived at without the consent of the little towns, and when to their natural reluctance to relinquish power long held are added the exigencies of partisanship, the result is a combination which cannot be overcome.

The legislature is a close corporation, then. In the last decade it has made what is supposed to be an irrevocable contract with the street railroad company whose lines radiate from Providence, giving it a monopoly for twenty years and probably much longer, and limiting to five per cent the rate at which its gross receipts may be taxed by the city. It has changed the time of the city election to coincide with the date of the national election. It has saddled a "Board of Canvassers and Registration" upon the city, for which the latter has to pay and pay well. It has proposed an amendment to the constitution dividing the city into legislative districts for the sake of maintaining partisan control of the city. From the mayor of the neighboring city of Pawtucket it has taken most of his power because he was of the opposite party. During the session which has just adjourned *until after election*, a bill was introduced to saddle a police commission upon Pawtucket, but owing to the unprecedented uprising of a vast majority of the citizens of that city, the bill has been given up for the present. A bill, evidently framed in the interest of the street railway company, was valiantly opposed by a few young members of the house and barely defeated; but within a few days it was brought up in the senate, slightly changed, and passed by both houses in spite of the same valiant opposition. In all but the one instance named, local protests, and they have been strong, have gone for nothing.

Looking at the matter in a general way, it would seem that a distinction must be made between arbitrary interference in local affairs for partisan or monopolistic advantage, and the regulation of matters which, on account of changed conditions, are becoming of general as well as local concern. The former, which is wholly evil, can be remedied by a general awakening of public spirit and increased watchfulness, and more particularly by the improvement of our legislative machinery, through caucus laws, representation which is represen-

tative—*i. e.*, proportional, and a referendum of all-important local measures to the localities themselves. As to the latter, in Rhode Island, where over 85 per cent of the people live in cities and towns of over 8,000, and where four-fifths of their number are within a radius of fifteen miles of the state-house in Providence, the state regulation of many things formerly deemed the exclusive province of the town or city, is bound to come. Were the legislature an actual representation of the people instead of a parody on it, there would be little cause for complaint in this compact little "city state," as it has been aptly styled.

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MR. CARNEGIE AS ECONOMIST AND SOCIAL REFORMER.

Under title of "The Gospel of Wealth,"¹ is brought together in convenient form, the thought product of a man who has not only proven himself a master in industrial enterprise, but also in close touch with his fellow men. Foreign-born, coming to America as a poor boy with his parents and younger brother, the whole family wage-earners, Mr. Carnegie is a splendid example of the common man, rising from squalor and adversity to the commanding position which honesty, industry and high standards of life make possible under free institutions. It is a commentary on European conditions to read of Czar and Emperor trembling for personal safety, looking upon the common man as a menace to society. Under the freer conditions of America, Australia or Canada this same class, many of them the very ones whose attitude toward society has been considered most dangerous, revolutionists, even criminals, coming to lands where the hold of government is most lax, become strong, useful, patriotic citizens—liberty-loving, but strong in their attachment to law and social order. It is quite as significant to find those who have labored in poverty, whose only shelter had been a shed, and whose reasonable hopes, under European conditions, could never rise above the associations of a thatched roof, becoming the sturdy, substantial men of affairs, or, possessed of uncommon ability, with broader opportunity given, coming to the forefront in the management of industry, commerce, in politics and in learning. Too often do we hear our institutions and our society berated. Too often do we have the narrow view of the man who draws his picture from the constrained horizon of a privileged class or the perverted eccentricity of a weakling. It is most hopeful to find a man, rising from humble station, attaining to success which gives him power superior to that of kings, still announcing a doctrine full of patriotic devotion to the institutions that have been favorable to his

¹ Published by the Century Publishing Company. New York, 1900. Pp. 305.